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(54) **Developing device, image forming apparatus, image forming system.**

(57) A developing device (54) for developing a latent image borne on an image bearing body (20) using a developer (T) borne on a developer bearing roller (510), is provided with: a housing (540) that is for containing the developer (T) and that has an opening (572); the developer bearing roller that is for bearing the developer and that is provided facing the opening; a sealing member (520) that abuts against the developer bearing roller to prevent the developer from spilling; a supporting member that is attached to the housing and that is for supporting the developer bearing roller and the sealing member; and an urging member that is for urging the sealing member toward the developer bearing roller and that is provided between the supporting member and a surface of the sealing member on an opposite side from an abutting surface of the sealing member with which the sealing member abuts against the developer bearing roller.

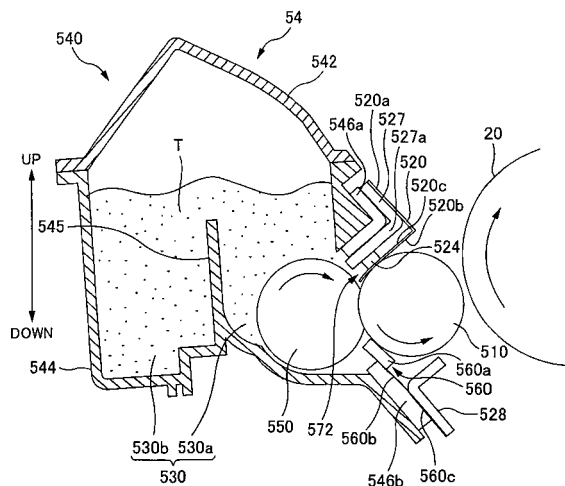


Fig.4



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 05 00 5003

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
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Y	US 5 585 895 A (YASHIRO ET AL) 17 December 1996 (1996-12-17) * column 6, line 10 - column 7, line 42; figures 7,8 *	9,13, 17-24,27	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
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Y			
A			
		-/--	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 29 September 2005	Examiner Borowski, M
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 05 00 5003

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT				
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)	
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A	* column 1, line 35 - column 5, line 47; figures 2,7 *	3,13,25, 27,33,41		
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims				
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 29 September 2005	Examiner Borowski, M	
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>				

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CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

- ☐ Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):
- ☐ No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

- ☒ All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.
- ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.
- ☐ Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:
- ☐ None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:



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**LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B**

Application Number
EP 05 00 5003

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. claims: 1-30

Developing device comprising a supporting member that is attached to the developing device housing and that is for supporting a developer bearing roller and a sealing member.

2. claims: 31-43

Developing device comprising a sealing member between the developing device housing and a developer bearing roller, wherein the flexural rigidity of the sealing member on said side of one end in said lateral direction thereof is larger than a flexural rigidity of said sealing member on said side of the other end in said lateral direction thereof.

3. claims: 44-56

Developing device comprising a sealing member between the developing device housing and a developer bearing roller, wherein a section of said housing that is in opposition to said end sealing member is provided with a cut-out section.

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 05 00 5003

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

29-09-2005

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